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Food and Home Notes

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE · WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

35TH YEAR

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FINAL ISSUE — "30" —

We are changing our operation in an effort to better serve you. Soon you will start receiving special feature stories and columns, tip sheets on possible stories and news releases on a timely basis. These will replace Food and Home Notes, and this will be the last issue of the newsletter. I will remain the telephone contact (202-447-5898) for news people.

Shirley Wagener, USDA's Feature Desk

Montana Women "Do It Themselves"

Montana Ranch Beef is a ready-to-eat canned meat product that developed because eight Montana ranch wives got their heads together, along with their farm economics expertise, and formed a corporation. Why? Because 2 years ago, farm families were not getting enough money to cover the cost of producing cows so they started looking for new ways to get their beef to the consumer.

Nancy Espy, vice president of the corporation, explained how they got started in the canned beef business. One of the ranch families donated a cow. The women cut it into large chunks--all but the tenderloin--and canned it. They added salt, nothing more. After staging a canned beef taste-test-in, the women decided to have it canned commercially. U.S. Department of Agriculture officials were called in to explain regulations and procedures for canning and marketing their product.

The eight ranch wives arranged for a canning plant in Butte, Montana, to produce 300 to 500 twelve-ounce cans of Montana Ranch Beef per day. The product can be used for quick stews and casseroles or to take boating or camping because it is canned and requires no refrigeration.

Where are they going with their new product? Montana Ranch Beef was one of the American products shown at an overseas trade show in Japan in September. Eleven companies expressed an interest in the product, some of them asking for additional information. After only two years of operating, the ranch wives have plans for building their own cannery in 1979.

Mrs. Espy is secretary of the Meat Promoters of Montana, is a member of the Cowbells organization, and is, like most other ranch wives, active with her husband in operating their 8,000 plus acreage in southeastern Montana. The Espys have five grown children, two of whom are working ranch-owners.

The other members of the Montana Ranch Beef corporation include Yvonne Snider (president and one of the founders), Molly Descheemaeker of Lewistown, Doris Know, Dorothy Benes, Fran Stucic, Sharon Peterson and Vi Udelhoven of Winifred, Montana. They are also members of the Women Involved in Farm Economics (WIFE).

Human Nutrition Research

Competitive grants for human nutrition basic research have been awarded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Science and Education Administration to:

Alabama, Auburn University -- on what influences zinc absorption in infants.

California, University of -- on zinc, vitamin A, copper and nucleic acid (Studies of pregnant women and their offspring).

Illinois, University of -- on preschool children's food preference development and potential digestibility and nutritive value of dietary fiber.

Iowa, State University (Ames) -- studies on the effects of dietary fat and cholesterol and a study of food selection patterns.

Kentucky, University of -- on a plant compound called phytate and various trace elements as related to the human diet.

Maryland, John Hopkins University (Baltimore) -- determine the protein requirements of premature infants and convalescing children.

Massachusetts, Marketing Science Institute, (Cambridge) -- a cooperative with the Community Nutrition Institute, Washington, D.C. for investigating of factors influencing people's choice of foods.

New York, Cornell -- riboflavin studies. Syracuse -- human iron requirements studies.

North Dakota, University of -- role of choline and methionine in the human diet.

Ohio, Webb Associates, Inc. (Yellow Springs) -- studies of overweight development.

Tennessee, Vanderbilt University -- on carnitine to see if it is essential for human nutrition.

Texas, University of (Health Center) -- on selenium requirements in human diets.

Virginia, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University -- on the role of zinc in women during and after pregnancy.

ABOUT YOU 'N' ME

More on women moving up....Kitty Harpen has been named director of news information in Washington, D.C. for ABC news. She was an aide to Ambassador Robert Strauss.....Mary Fifield who held the ABC post before, has moved to New York as director of news and public relations for ABC news.

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